

Message Text

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PAGE 01 WARSAW 07925 071448Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 BIB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10
NSAE-00 PA-01 ICA-11 SP-02 SOE-02 AID-05 CEA-01
COME-00 EB-08 DOE-15 H-01 INT-05 L-03 NSC-05
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FM AMEMBASSY WARSAW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7301
USDOC WASHDC
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMCONSUL KRAKOW POUCH
AMCONSUL LENINGRAD
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL POZNAN POUCH
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
USMISSION USNATO
AMCONSUL MUNICH

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EO 11652: NA
TAGS: ENRG PL
SUBJ: ELECTRIC POWER SHORTAGES IN POLAND; AUTHORITATIVE WEEKLY
PREDICTS BLACKOUTS IN MONTHS AHEAD

1. AN ARTICLE IN THE AUGUST 26 ISSUE OF POLAND'S AUTHORITATIVE
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WEEKLY NEWSPAPER POLITYKA MAKES SOME UNUSUALLY REVEALING STATE-
MENTS ON THE SERIOUSNESS OF POLAND'S ELETRIC POWER PROBLEMS.

2. THE ARTICLE STATES THAT TOTAL DEMAND FOR ELECTRICITY IN
POLAND DURING PEAK HOURS IS SLIGHTLY LESS THAN 15,000 MEGAWATTS
(MW). BUT PRESENT CAPACITY, THE ARTICLE IMPLIES, IS BARELY
EQUAL TO THIS FIGURE EVEN THOUGH, ON PAPER, IT IS LISTED

AS 24,000 MW. THIS YEAR'S ENERGY INVESTMENTS ARE SUPPOSED TO INCREASE GENERATING CAPACITY BY ALMOST 2,500 MW. HOWEVER, ONLY ABOUT 1,200 MW OF THIS NEW CAPACITY WILL ACTUALLY BE IN OPERATION BY DECEMBER 1978, AND SHUTDOWNS OF GENERATING PLANTS FOR RENOVATION WILL REDUCE THE NET ADDITION TO TOTAL CAPACITY TO A MERE 1,000 MW.

3. SINCE PEAK DEMAND IS EXPECTED TO INCREASE BY AT LEAST 1,500 MW, THE AUTHOR BLUNTLY WARNS THAT SUDDEN ELECTRICAL BLACKOUTS MUST BE EXPECTED IN THE MONTHS AHEAD.

4. THIS UNHAPPY SITUATION IS BLAMED ON THE URGENT NEED TO RENOVATE SUBSTANTIAL PARTS OF POLAND'S EXISTING POWER GENERATING EQUIPMENT (AND ON THE DIFFICULTIES INHERENT IN ADAPTING POWER PLANTS TO BURN LOWER QUALITY LIGNITE COAL.)

5. COMMENT: THE LATTER EXCUSE IS LENT CREDIBILITY BY A RECENT GOP ANNOUNCEMENT OF PLANS TO INCREASE RAPIDLY PRODUCTION OF LIGNITE COAL FOR USE IN POWER PLANTS. THE REMAINDER OF THE BLAME PROBABLY RESTS WITH A COMBINATION OF FACTORS: RAPID ECONOMIC GROWTH IN RECENT YEARS AND CONCOMITANT INCREASES IN DEMAND, THE OBSOLESCENCE OF THE GENERATING EQUIPMENT NOW IN USE, AND THE OVERALL ECONOMIC INEFFICIENCY OF POLAND'S SOCIALIST ECONOMY. END COMMENT.

6. A SEPTEMBER 3 ARTICLE IN THE LEADING POLISH ECONOMIC LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WEEKLY ZYCIE GOSPODARCZE CONFIRMS THE ENERGY FIGURES AND PROGNOSIS GIVEN IN THE POLITYKA ARTICLE. FURTHER DETAILS ARE GIVEN CONCERNING THE SIZE OF THE EXPECTED DEFICIT IN ELECTRICITY PRODUCTION. THE DEFICIT IS EXPECTED TO BE 700 MW OUT OF TOTAL DEMAND AMOUNTING TO 14,700 MW. THE ARTICLE ALSO STATES THAT THE DEFICIT DURING THE WINTER DEMAND PEAK MAY EVEN REACH 3,000 MW. NEVERTHELESS, IT IS CLAIMED THAT ELECTRICITY PRODUCTION WILL SURPASS THE PLANNED TOTAL OF 115 BILLION KILOWATT HOURS IN 1978 BY OVER 1 BILLION KILOWATT HOURS. SCHAUFEL

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Disposition History: n/a
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